

MR. MORLEY'S SPEECH.

IT is the opinion of a writer in the *Times* that Mr. Morley, in his speech at Newcastle on Tuesday, did not rise above the level of "threadbare commonplace." The phrase was an awkwardly dangerous one when used by a person writing in that particular column of the *Times* which for the past five years has been associated with stale vituperation alike of English and Irish statesmen, and the wearisome iteration of the pompous platitudes which, in Unionist circles, are accepted in lieu of argument. Yet there was a certain measure of truth, little suspected by the *Times* writer himself, in his description of Mr. Morley's speech. His arguments are old; his truths are commonplace. The same may be said of the Ten Commandments, or the Sermon on the Mount, or Magna Charta itself. Where men are compelled, year after year, to deal with the same general facts, applying them to the same broad problem, they cannot pretend to indulge in new arguments, or in those fanciful devices by means of which clever politicians sometimes seek to tickle the ears of the groundlings. Mr. Morley has done good service to the country by bringing out the one clear fact that the Irish Question stands very much where it did, despite the storms and dissensions, the treason and the violence, of the past six weeks. We are all agreed as to the iniquity of Mr. Parnell's conduct—as to its selfishness and its treachery. We admit with pain that he is now the worst enemy of Ireland, possessed with a capacity for injuring the National cause which makes him a thousand times more formidable than Mr. Balfour and his band of admirers and sycophants. But we refuse to identify Ireland with the name of the man who has betrayed and dishonoured her, or the Irish cause with his attempt to gratify his own mean and selfish purposes.

This is the stand which Mr. Morley takes, and in taking which he makes himself the representative and spokesman of all that is best in the Liberal party. That party took up the cause of Home Rule five years ago under the pressure of a conviction long resisted, and at last accepted with something like compunction. It took it up because it had at last slowly and reluctantly come to the conclusion that the Irish policy of the British people had been proved by the experience of eighty years to be a ghastly and hopeless failure. It may be that its sense of this truth was quickened by the fact that the failure had affected the interests of England almost as much as the interests of Ireland. On the one side we saw a country which for fourscore years had endured alternate vicissitudes of cuffing and kissing; where the population was for ever on the verge of starvation, and on the verge of revolt; and where the one avenue to public life which was open to any man in three of the four provinces was the avowal of an unquenchable hatred of the English Government. On the other side we saw our own domestic affairs entangled and confused, useful legislation delayed, ministries overthrown, even our foreign relations complicated, and the national peace endangered, by the existence in the House of Commons, in the constituencies of Great Britain, and in the United States, of a strong body of Irishmen inspired by feelings of the bitterest hostility to the Government of the United Kingdom. These were the stubborn arguments which led Mr. Gladstone and his followers in 1885 and 1886 to face the great Irish problem in a new spirit, with a fixed resolve to see whether it was not capable of being solved honourably and safely, by the adoption of different methods from those by which it had hitherto been treated. Mr. Morley on Tuesday indicated,

lightly but clearly, the existence of these grave factors in the Irish Question. We would like to ask the people who have been frightened away from the Home Rule cause by recent events—the people who, last November, would have voted for a Liberal candidate, but who would vote to-day for a Tory—whether any one of these arguments has been affected in even the slightest degree by the misconduct of Mr. Parnell. They know in their hearts that it is not so; they know that whatever exultant Tories or half-hearted Liberals may say in their folly, the Irish Question remains where it did, and demands an answer in tones as imperious as those which it used five years ago, when Ireland sent an almost united representation of Home Rulers to Parliament, to force the people of England and Scotland to reconsider their Irish policy.

"Home Rule is dead," cry the parrots on both sides. Be it so. What, then, is to follow Home Rule? Do the people who exult over the check which has been received by Mr. Gladstone in his great work of pacification and conciliation—the greatest and noblest work to which an English statesman has ever set his hands—ask themselves what would follow supposing that check were to prove fatal to the work? Do they ever think of what it would mean in the House of Commons? They have exulted over the brutality, the hypocrisy, and the mendacity of Mr. Parnell's methods when applied to his own colleagues in Committee Room No. 15. How would they like to see the same methods employed in the House of Commons for the purpose of obstructing business and demoralising a political party which declined to do justice to Ireland? Do they really think that the abandonment of Home Rule by the English Liberals would so far satisfy the Irish voters in America that we should be able henceforth to conduct delicate negotiations with the Secretary of State at Washington without any thought of the Irish vote in the American elections? And in Ireland—would the death of Home Rule be followed by the reign of peace? Would Fenianism calmly close its eyes, fold its arms upon its breast, and lie down to expire gently by the side of the lost cause? Would the Invincibles, the Dynamiters, the host of violent and wicked agencies which have been driven from the field by the union of English Liberals and Irish Home Rulers, fail to make use of the opportunity offered to them when that field was once more left empty? These are a few of the questions which it behoves the people who are talking of Home Rule as dead, and who complain of Mr. Morley's brilliant speech as "threadbare commonplace," to answer before they fortify themselves in the strong delusion in which they have found a refuge for their troubled souls.

The Irish Question, as Mr. Morley has shown, remains where it did—in all its awkwardness, in all its difficulty, in all its danger. As for the paltry arguments of those who think that the debates in Room No. 15, or the occasional disagreements during the election at Kilkenny, have "proved the unfitness of Irishmen for Home Rule," we can only say that it would be absurd and hopeless to attempt to refute such feeble, fatuous nonsense. The Irish, so far in this struggle, have proved their right to self-government by the very courage and tenacity with which they have clung to their opinions, by their resolute independence, and by the statesmanship which has not been wanting on the side of those who have thrown off the yoke of Mr. Parnell. It is for Irishmen, not for Englishmen, to put an end to the present crisis. Nobody, it is true, will kill Home Rule. The great problem will not be stifled even by the treason of Mr. Parnell. But it does lie at this

moment with the people of Ireland to say whether the next ten years shall witness the peaceful solution of old difficulties and the triumphant consummation of long-cherished hopes, or whether they shall be devoted, as so many past years have been, to the perpetuation of ancient feuds, to the ever-growing embitterment of the relations not only of the two countries but of the two races throughout the world, and to the hopeless attempt of English statesmen to discharge their duties to the Empire, whilst struggling with the burden of Irish obstruction in the House and Irish disaffection in the constituencies. This is the problem which the people of Ireland are called upon to solve, and it is indeed curious to think that there are Englishmen so absolutely blinded to its real nature, as to look forward with exultant joy to the possibility of a solution which would give the next ten years of our history the dreary, we might even say the tragical, character we have tried to describe.

THE STRIKES AND THE LAW OF STRIKES.

FOR weeks the outlook in the industrial world has been bad, and never was it worse than in that which closes while we write. The two great Scotch railways, employing thousands of men, are in a state of disorganisation. Long lines of laden trucks stand idle; urgent orders remain unfulfilled; the supply of coals runs short at many points; and the passenger traffic, though not so much out of gear as the goods traffic, is conducted under an ever-present sense of danger. Could we stand by the cold hearths of the strikers, we should see worse still; incalculable must be the misery suffered by them and their families in those inclement weeks. Whatever be the result of the struggle between the Caledonian and North British Railway Companies and their men—and the prospects of the strikers are now by no means good—it must be a disaster to the community. To us, the gloomiest circumstance is not the loss of wealth, nor even the misery coming in the train of a great strike, but the absence of any feasible suggestion for ending or even mitigating the fury of the strife. Mr. Burns says, "Fight on"; Mr. Thompson says the same to his company. We do not pretend to see clearly the final outcome of an industrial convulsion comparable in magnitude and consequence to that which in the fourteenth century led to the destruction of villenage. The profoundest economists must speak with doubt of that new birth with which our time is in labour. But two comments which have not been made upon the controversy are not unimportant. In the first place, it will no longer do to say, as has been so often said by employers, "We will not deal with the so-called representatives of the men; we do not recognise their authority; we will treat, if at all, directly with the men." Not merely is it out of the question in these days to ignore such men as Mr. Harford, but it is pretty plain that it is only possible to end such disputes as the present by dealing with the despised and maligned delegates. The notion that discontent always originates with "agitators"—that is, agents of the men, the equivalents of the directors, officials, solicitors, and other paid representatives of capital—and that peace would come but for their interested action, is a sheer delusion. It will probably be admitted by many of those who know most about the inner history of the controversies of the last few weeks between railway companies and their servants, that the reverse is nearer the truth, and that, but for the fact that the agents of the men are on the whole

interested in accepting reasonable terms and in not counselling the pursuit of desperate courses, the possibility of a compromise would be gone. Our second observation is this: it is well-nigh hopeless, when the parties to a dispute have passed a certain point, to induce them to accept arbitration—at all events, until one of the two is conscious that he is beaten. The failure of the well-meant efforts of Mr. Haldane and Lord Provost Boyd to settle the dispute illustrates this; and everywhere, except as to labour or capital, this fact is recognised. Merchants agree as to the mode of arbitration before any differences have arisen. Why should not employers and workmen do the same? Why should not every great industry have its Chamber of Conciliation, composed of representatives of capital and labour, to which in the first instance a resort should be made when a dispute arose? Why should not there be a general extension of the Conciliation scheme formulated a year ago by the London Chamber of Commerce? We do not make the suggestion under any foolish belief that it would solve the difficulties which disturb industry; it could be but at best an alleviation—a breakwater sufficient to resist all but very high tides of pressure. And these are not times in which any device likely to any appreciable degree to diminish the frequency or fury of struggles certain, under the present régime, to recur, is to be neglected.

A new turn to the controversy about strikes has been given by the decision of Mr. Bompas, Q.C., Recorder of Plymouth. Mr. Treleaven, a coal merchant of that city, employed non-union men as coal-porters. Thereupon the three local union secretaries made a call-out in the following terms:—"Inasmuch as Mr. Treleaven still insists upon employing non-union men, we, your officials, call upon all union men to leave their work. Use no violence, use no immoderate language, but quietly cease to work and go home." The union men did as they were told; they stopped work. Mr. Treleaven proceeded against the secretaries; the magistrates convicted them; and the Recorder affirmed the convictions. He did so, as we understand his decision, on two grounds. In the first place, he says that a conspiracy to do "an intentional injury to the trade of another" is indictable at common law. In the second place, the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875, does not in his opinion legalise such conduct. True, by Section 3, "an agreement or combination by two or more persons to do or to procure to be done any act in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute between employers and workmen should not be indictable as a conspiracy if such act committed by one person would not be punishable as a crime"; but this is cut down, it is said, by Section 7, which still renders liable to punishment "every person who, with a view to compel any other person to abstain from doing or to do any other act which such person has a legal right to do or abstain from doing, wrongfully and without legal authority uses violence or intimidates such person." Now, Mr. Bompas found as a fact that Mr. Treleaven was reasonably afraid of injury to his property—that is, was intimidated. From the decision we entirely dissent. There are, to be sure, rulings of judges, never approved or brought under review in a Court of Appeal, giving this wide meaning to intimidation. But "intimidate" has acquired in law no technical sense; it is to be read in its ordinary sense unless the Act indicates the contrary—which we suggest it does not; and the history of the Act of 1875 forbids the idea that Section 7 was intended by a side-wind to withdraw that which seems so plainly given by Section 3. At all events, if Mr. Bompas be right, we must do as was done when the

decision in the gas-stokers' case showed the defects in the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871, now repealed. The Bill prepared by Mr. Edmund Robertson, M.P., to amend the law of conspiracy, will, with a few words inserted, be sufficient. The law as expounded by Mr. Bompas cannot be suffered to remain. It would be intolerable to make the use of the innocent words which we have quoted an offence.

THE CHILIAN CRISIS.

AS we write it is still uncertain whether, as reported last week, there has been a revolution in Chili. A New York telegram states that the navy has revolted, but a Buenos Ayres telegram alleges that only one squadron has declared against the President; while the Chilean Minister in Paris, in an interview with the representative of a newspaper, asserts that only three ships out of thirty-one had gone over to the Opposition. He adds that the army is on the side of the Government. But as we are told that a strict censorship of the telegraphic messages is maintained, it is uncertain how far we can trust to these reports. Whatever may be the truth, a revolution seems only too likely; for the struggle between the President and the Chambers has become so bitter that for months past an outbreak has seemed imminent. In many respects, the political condition of Chili reminds us of that of England in the early years of George the Third. Practically, the Government heretofore has been monopolised by a few great families at Santiago. They have appointed Presidents and dictated the policy of the Republic. But almost from the very outset of his administration President Balmaceda has been at variance with them, and with the Chambers which they influence. The real character of the President is not easy to understand, for all the organs of public opinion are controlled by his opponents; and by them he is of course described as an ambitious man, arbitrary, violent, and obstinate, who in the pursuit of his own ends is totally reckless of the interests of the country. But if this be true, he may plead in his defence that the Chambers and great families that inspire them are no more public-spirited than himself. The Chambers are split up into a multitude of parties, which, like the groups in the French Chamber just before the rise of Boulangism, are constantly combining and separating, so that a stable administration seems to be hardly possible. In fact there have been nearly twenty Cabinets since President Balmaceda entered office, the life of each being about three months. Of course his opponents point to this incessant change of Ministry as proof of the President's impracticability. His predecessors, they argue, had no such difficulty to contend with, and he cannot keep his Cabinets because he is overbearing in manner, devoid of tact, wanting in statesmanship, and aiming at objects which worthy men will not assist. Whether the fault rests with the President, or with the Chambers, or with both, it is at all events certain that early last year, in a message to the Chambers, the President recommended a series of reforms which would have limited very greatly his own powers, while no doubt they would destroy the influence of the great families. In effect his recommendations were to adopt a system very like that of the United States—that is to say, Home Rule for the provinces and a Supreme Court with power to decide upon the constitutionality of all laws passed. Of course it is possible that in this he was inspired only by the hope of “dishing the Whigs.” But it seems more probable that he is

honestly persuaded that a sweeping reform is urgently needed.

The President's term of office comes to an end next September, and his great desire at present is to secure the appointment of a successor. It is not disputed that hitherto each outgoing President has chosen his successor, and arranged for his election. No doubt, if Señor Balmaceda were on good terms with the great families, he would be allowed to do so also. But as he is not, his electioneering manoeuvres are fiercely denounced, and Cabinet after Cabinet has been driven from office on charges of illegal interference with the constituencies. The President, it will be understood, appoints the Governors of Provinces, and they appoint the subordinate officials. Practically, therefore, he has control of the whole administrative service of the Republic, and through this service he is able to manage the electors just as the Minister of the Interior does in France. In June last, the Chamber of Deputies by seventy to one passed a vote of censure on the Ministers, stating that their continuance in office was contrary to constitutional practice. The President disregarded the vote, and about a week later, by sixty votes to twenty-nine, the Deputies refused permission to the Government to collect the taxes. The President replied in a manifesto in which he declared that he would maintain intact the powers conferred upon him by the people and the constitution. As he was debarred from collecting the taxes, he gave notice to the banks which held large sums of Government money on deposit that he would require the money in thirty days. This caused very nearly a panic in the Money Market, as the banks, of course, were obliged to call in loans they had made. The excitement was increased by the bringing up of troops from the outlying provinces to the capital. Naturally, the Opposition regarded this as an attempt to overawe Congress and stifle the freedom of debate, while the President's supporters declared that the only object was to insure the maintenance of order. Just then riots broke out in the nitrate districts of Tarapaca, and, in the heated partisan spirit of the time, it was believed by many that they were instigated by the President in his hatred of the English nitrate companies, the real truth being that the depreciation of the paper currency lowered wages so much that the *employés* were justified in demanding an advance, and succeeded in getting it. The strikes were unfortunately accompanied, as already said, by violent riots, which were not suppressed until after blood had been shed. The riots in Tarapaca were followed by other riots in Valparaiso, where again troops had to be used to restore order. At length an arrangement between the President and the Chambers was brought about, and a “Conciliation Ministry” was appointed early in August. But in the first week of October it resigned, five out of the six Ministers declaring that they retired because of the President's personal interference in electoral affairs, and because the President, when required, refused to remove the officials who had been active in putting pressure upon the electors. On the 18th of October, at a great meeting in Santiago, it was resolved that “It is the duty of all honest citizens of the Republic, without distinction of party, to unite in their efforts to resist, by legal means as long as the Government keeps within constitutional bounds, and by every possible means when it oversteps them.”

The President, however, was not frightened. A Congressional Committee, known as the *Comision Conservadora*, which sits at Santiago while the Chambers are not in session, called upon the President to summon Congress for the discussion of important measures. He merely acknowledged the

receipt of this communication, which the committee regarded as a slight to itself, and it once more called upon him to convoke Congress. Apparently, however, he has remained obstinate; and according to the latest mail news he had ordered troops to hurry up from the provinces to the capital, to be prepared for any revolutionary movement. It will be seen that the crisis is almost entirely political. It may have been slightly aggravated by the depression in the copper-mining and nitrate industries, the latter especially suffering much at present. No doubt, also, it has been somewhat accentuated by the depreciation of the paper money. The paper dollar, which was worth in gold at the end of 1888 29d., has now fallen to 22d.—a fall of over 24 per cent. And this depreciation necessarily presses heavily upon the poorer classes, inasmuch as it raises greatly the prices of all imported articles. Still, these are only subsidiary and unimportant influences. The real cause of the crisis is political; and it has become acute just now because of the eagerness of both parties to make sure that the next President shall be on their own side. It is this which induces those who best know the country to believe that a revolution is inevitable if the President does not submit. Whether he will do so depends mainly, of course, upon the attitude of the army. As has been seen above, the navy, or at all events part of it, is on the side of the Chambers. But there is more doubt respecting the army. The most eminent officers, those who gained distinction in the Peruvian war, who may, therefore, be supposed to have most influence with the soldiery, are believed to be opposed to the President, as they are almost all of them aristocrats. But the President has been weeding out the officers on whom he could not rely, and, it is said, entrusting the commands of importance only to those on whom he could count. If this be really so, and if these officers can carry their men with them, then the President may be able to hold his ground, and to put down an insurrectionary movement. On the other hand, if both the army and the navy declare against him, he must either submit or resign. In all probability we shall not have to wait long for the event.

MORE TROUBLE IN TICINO.

THE circumstances of the revolution in Ticino last September have probably not yet faded from the memory of the English public. For twenty-six years the Clericals or Conservatives and the Liberals (many of whom are sufficiently devout Catholics to pray to the Virgin for success at the polls) have been bitterly hostile; and for sixteen years the crisis has been more or less acute. Under the cantonal Constitution, however, the clerical minority is, as it happens, greatly over-represented, and so the Conservatives have always had the advantage. How last summer the Liberals duly presented a formal demand for a popular vote on the revision of the Constitution, how the cantonal Government made pretexts for delay, how the Liberals then appealed to the Federal Council, and how, while it was preparing to deliberate, a Provisional Government was set up by force; how Federal intervention was necessitated, how the revision by a Constituent Assembly to be specially elected was carried by a narrow majority, and how, after repeated "conciliation conferences," a Coalition Government was set up to conduct the elections, is probably, as the late Professor T. Green used to say of the inconsistencies he had detected in the philo-

sophical works of Hume, "within the recollection of the most careless student" of foreign politics.

This week, however, a new difficulty has arisen, the solution of which it is not easy to foresee. For some time it has been clear that the Liberals were dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Coalition Government, and that, depending as they did largely on the votes of non-residents, they had not much prospect of a second victory. This prospect has been diminished, as they allege, by the arbitrary application of the registration laws in favour of the dominant party, who have, moreover, adopted an ingenious trick—"the double list"—which we do not recollect to have heard of before. The law allows any ten electors in a district to nominate a list of candidates. Each district returns several members, and, to secure the representation of minorities, no voter can vote for the whole number. Nor may any voter produce a "mixed ticket" by "scratching" candidates from the list he adopts and substituting other names. He must vote some one of the regular tickets, and vote it entire. If then, besides the regular party tickets another list is put out, containing (let us say) some Conservative and some Independent candidates, it is clear that personal preferences for the latter will attract some voters away from the "straight" Liberal ticket, and that the Conservatives, whose names are on this second ticket, will get the substantial part of the benefit. The Independent, or non-political, candidates thus serve as mere decoys. The Conservatives have practised this device extensively, and the Liberals, though they have availed themselves of it in two districts, finding that it tends to the advantage of their adversaries, first vainly protested to the Federal Council, and then decided—partly on this ground, partly because of the alleged tampering with the registers—to abstain entirely from voting. The decision was not arrived at without a struggle; but once reached, it has been loyally maintained. Last Sunday the voting took place. Out of twenty-five thousand electors, less than ten thousand went to the poll—Conservatives almost to a man. In one village no votes were cast at all; in others less than a dozen; and, as compared with last October, even the Conservative vote showed a decline—no doubt because the contest was felt to be meaningless. Usually, in Continental elections, a candidate must obtain an absolute majority of the constituency; and this, in many cases, must have been impossible last Sunday. Apparently this rule does not hold good in Ticino; but a Constituent Assembly with a mandate from a minority to revise the Constitution is necessarily destitute of moral weight; and the result of its labours is not very likely to obtain the assent of the people when finally submitted to a popular vote. The Liberals will continue to protest, and the Federal Council, with its Radical tendencies, can hardly refuse them its support.

At first sight, of course, the Liberals seem like children playing, who when they see that they are losing, say "You're cheating; I shan't play any more." And if politics were only a game, this criticism would be fair enough. But the Liberals have real and substantial grievances—malversation of public funds, underhand and dishonourable conduct on the part of the Government, and scandalous perversion of justice. When they can muster all their voters, they have a small majority. But like other inhabitants of the Italian Alps, the Ticinese emigrate extensively. The local papers of both parties can be purchased in London; and there is a Hôtel Ticino in the foreign quarter of New York. They may leave their country as Conservatives; they return as advanced Liberals; and their numbers are swollen at election time by their compatriots domiciled elsewhere in Switzerland,

and by the natives of other cantons domiciled in Ticino, whose right to vote on this occasion has only been established by an appeal to the Federal Council. But these enlightened Ticinese are always outvoted by the representatives of the immensely over-represented mountain districts, who are said to be controlled to some extent by petty local landlords, of the type of the Irish squireen of former days, and who certainly are completely under clerical influence. Already the revolution in Ticino has suggested some curious points in the theory of Federalism, and caused the decision of one important problem in international law. It has now raised another question—What amount of moral weight attaches to a popular vote when more than half the electors practise abstention? And as far as can be seen at present, the deadlock—for such it practically is—can only be solved by renewed Federal intervention, probably at the expense of strict cantonal independence.

LESSONS FROM THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

THE official report on the manœuvres of last year is worth more careful study than it is likely to receive. Of all the operations carried out in recent years, none have been so instructive and practical as the last. There were no mock actions between ships, no simulated bombardments of undefended towns, and the correspondents were deprived alike of picturesque material and of the special opportunities for arriving at misleading conclusions in regard to questions of coast defence which presented themselves in former years. The opposing fleets not having come into contact, and the "enemy" having remained undisturbed for several days on the trade route laid down by the rules of the game, it is perhaps natural that on the one hand the "general idea" should have been blamed, and on the other hand that new and unsuspected dangers to commerce should have been assumed to stand revealed. The Admiralty has done excellent service in laying something more than a mere report on the operations before the country. The objects sought to be attained are clearly expounded; the general theory of naval manœuvres is lucidly explained; and certain deductions of great value are drawn from the fully known circumstances.

Manœuvres, apart from their special aims, are practical tests of mobilising power. While all deductions are open to question as soon as fleets are brought into contact, and even the commerce-destroying potentiality of a free fleet is a matter of debate, the actual mobilisation of squadrons at least is more than the counterfeit of war. "Mobilisation has no necessary connection with grand manœuvres; but . . . the forces brought together . . . can be utilised conveniently to solve . . . tactical or strategical problems which would present themselves, probably at an early stage of the contest, if we are ever engaged in a maritime war." The order for partial mobilisation was issued on the 21st of July. On the following day, 24 ships and 24 torpedo-boats were put in commission, and 12 armour-clads had their crews completed. "On the 26th, four days after commissioning, 33 of the above 36 ships, and all the torpedo-boats, had reached the points of assembly." This is a result with which the country may well be satisfied, and it is one which no other Power could have equalled.

The "fleet evolutions" having ended, and the mobilised ships having practised with shotted guns—a most necessary measure omitted in previous years—the enemy's (C) squadron of eight battle-ships, with twelve cruisers and other vessels, under Vice-Admiral Sir M. Culme Seymour, assembled at Berehaven; the "British" (A) fleet of nine battle-ships and thirteen other vessels, commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir G. Tryon, concentrated at Ply-

mouth; and a reserve (B) squadron of six armour-clads and four other vessels, under Commodore Powlett, rested at Portland. On the 8th of August, the three fleets received a telegram—"Hostilities are to begin at 5 p.m. on the 8th of August, and will end at 5 p.m. on the 18th of August." The same night a little flotilla of the enemy's torpedo-boats dashed across the Channel from Alderney and delivered an admirably conceived and executed attack on the squadron at Plymouth. The umpires pronounce no verdict on the operation, and the hopeless conflict of evidence renders definite deductions impossible; but the A squadron was at least partially surprised, and five ships were struck by torpedoes, two of them twice. Given the unprotected state of the fleet, the distribution adopted at the anchorage, and the nerve shown by the torpedo-boat commanders, it is difficult to believe that damage would not have been inflicted. One thing, at least, is certain. If ever a torpedo-boat attack on a fleet in port is to be successful, these "Rowdies"—so called by an ill-advised correspondent—have shown the way; and that the British Navy will find an abundance of young officers eager to show equal dash in presence of a real enemy, there is no doubt.

With this incident, the excitement of the manœuvres practically ended. Sir G. Tryon dexterously transferred his base to Scilly, moving up his colliers under the guardianship of the *Hotspur*, and thence proceeded to scour a large section of the prescribed trade route, maintaining communication with England, and holding his fleet well in hand in expectation of attack. The useful chart issued by the Admiralty shows the great tract of water thus covered, extending about 250 miles from Land's End. Within this large area, an enemy could not have operated undetected, nor could he well have avoided an action. Sir M. Seymour, however, though disposing of a force little inferior to that of his opponent, avoided all risk of contact, and, leaving Berehaven on the 8th of August, struck the trade route at midnight on the 10th, "at a point where it was 180 miles wide, and where no concentration of traffic could be looked for." Fearing a failure of coal supply, he directed three colliers, "engaged to carry coal to the ships lying in harbour or safe anchorage, or wherever coal may be safely transhipped within the coasting limits" to a rendezvous south of the Azores. Here, favoured by the sea, he was able to partly coal his ships on the last day of hostilities. It would be interesting to know the amount of coal with which these vessels returned to port, since the possible injury inflicted on the trade route, as well as the safety of the fleet thus launched far into the Atlantic, evidently depended upon coal endurance.

Although it is to be regretted that the arrangements made by Sir G. Tryon for concentrating his command for action were not tested, in consequence of the unexpected movement of his opponent, the manœuvres were by no means deprived of their value on this account. The A fleet covered the most important "neck of commerce" of the Empire, and maintained its communication with England. Within the sphere of its action the *guerre de course* was impossible, and only a powerful hostile squadron willing to offer action could have ventured. It was thus shown that skilfully handled armour-clads can take their part in the protection of commerce without abandoning their rôle of battle-ships. This is one of the many possibilities arising under modern conditions, which will undoubtedly enter into future wars. Another important result is "that opinions on the effective radius of torpedo-boat action will have to be reconsidered." It has been assumed that this radius is practically limited to a few hours, since severe strain is entailed upon the officers, who must, nevertheless, retain their nerve and readiness of resource unimpaired for the moment of attack. No. 87 boat, however, showed that "a continuous run of four hundred and twenty miles could be made;" and the ability displayed in the attack on the Plymouth fleet,